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## **NEWS RELEASE**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
**August 4, 2005**

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### **SACRAMENTO WOMAN SENTENCED TO FIVE YEARS AND THREE MONTHS IN PRISON FOR CREDIT CARD FRAUD AND IDENTITY THEFT**

*The Defendant Victimized More Than 39 Retailers Causing Losses of More Than \$216,857*

SACRAMENTO—United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott and Resident Agent-in-Charge Brady J. Mills, United States Secret Service, announced today that AMBER LATREASE MITCHELL, 30, of Sacramento, California, was sentenced to five years and three months in federal prison and 3 years of supervised release for her participation in a massive three-year long credit card and identity fraud scheme. Hon. Edward J. Garcia, U.S. District Court judge, appointed to the bench in 1984, presided over the trial and sentencing hearing. Before pronouncing sentence, the judge stated that he had "never seen a bolder fraud."

The case is the product of an extensive investigation undertaken by the United States Secret Service. It was prosecuted with the additional assistance of the Sacramento Valley High-Tech Crimes Task Force, Sacramento Sheriff Department, and the Placer Sheriff's Department, as well as retail and bank investigators.

According to Robin R. Taylor, who prosecuted the case, defendant MITCHELL was convicted on March 25, 2005, after a jury trial of credit card fraud occurring from February 15, 2001, through December 8, 2003. At the trial and sentencing hearing, it was established that defendant MITCHELL used more than 30 different stolen credit card numbers and credit cards to make more than 400 fraudulent purchases at retailers such as Target, Mervyn's, The Good Guy's, Walmart, Gap Stores, Gottschalks, J.C. Penny's, and Best Buy, causing losses of more than \$216,857. The defendant used the credit cards to purchase high dollar value gift cards and

merchandise.

Defendant MITCHELL made numerous purchases using stolen credit card numbers, often writing the stolen number on a temporary instant credit card given to customers before their credit card is issued. Other fraudulent purchases were made using cancelled and/or revoked credit cards. There was evidence at trial that the defendant had knowledge that allowed her to use these cards to make purchases, even if they were initially declined at the cash register. To conceal the fraud, the defendant used gift cards to buy additional gift cards and often exchanged one gift card for another. When arrested at her home, law enforcement found a volume of stolen merchandise, including high-end electronics, six television sets, Play Station 2s, CDs and DVDs, as well as clothing, and cosmetics.

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